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For Immediate Release

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DA Provides Resources and Training to Teens and Parents Through Virtual Classes

When COVID-19 and social distancing threatened to interfere with plans to provide crime prevention and social media awareness skills to teens and their families, the curriculum was quickly transformed to an online platform, drawing students from San Ysidro to Poway.



Families in Motion

Register Today!

Families in Motion is a collaborative program designed to help educate teens and their parents on issues confronting teenagers today.

- Four-week virtual program, Tuesday evenings, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- Topics to be covered include navigating COVID-19, the dangers of social media, and the prevention of human trafficking, drugs, and gangs.
- Additional community resources are offered to families participating in the program such as food, clothing, housing, and counseling.
- At the conclusion of the program, both teens and parents receive a certificate of participation, and students receive CWS credit.
- 2 hours for each class, 12 hours if they attend all four sessions, and an extra hour if a parent attends.

Communication Skills
Healthy Relationships **Decision Making**

For more information or to register, please contact:
Community Partnership Prosecutors
Marissa Bejarano at Marissa.Bejarano@sdca.org or Cheryl Sueing-Jones at Cheryl.Sueing-Jones@sdca.org

Families in Motion is a four-week outreach and training program offered to teen students and their parents by the District Attorney's Office and the San Diego Police Department. Topics include issues confronting teens today such as dealing with COVID-19, navigating social media and preventing drug use, gang activity and human trafficking.

"Preventing young people from becoming victims or perpetrators of crime is an important priority

for my office, especially with schools closed," District Attorney Summer Stephan said. "Families in Motion builds resilience and also offers a restorative path for youth who may already be engaged in unhealthy or risky criminal behavior."

The current program, which is an offshoot of the San Diego Police Department's program that ran from 2015 to 2017, runs for two hours a week for four weeks. Students hear from DA Community Partnership Prosecutors, mental health professionals and law enforcement partners. Each session begins with a check-in, in which students share how they are feeling and why. The session then turns to the educational piece where teens and parents learn from various experts.

During the first session, teens and parents learned about mental health, coping skills, and community resources available to families during the pandemic. They also learned about the impact of social media on mental health. Students and their parents also participate in polls and discuss how teens can make better decisions when confronted with difficult scenarios.

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Following the session involving human trafficking, one student said it was eye opening.

“It has helped me to better understand how children become victims of exploitation and human trafficking,” Mario Morales said. “I don't want that to happen to me or anyone in my family and I now know better how to prevent us from becoming victims.”

Classes are limited to 25 students to encourage participation and bonding. The response has been overwhelming and a wait list has already been established for those interested in participating in future sessions.

“It’s more important than ever to connect with our youth and their parents and offer services that can help them better handle issues they are facing,” DA Stephan said. “When young people have skills to make good choices and access to basic needs, they are less likely to end up in the criminal justice system. A special thanks to Community Partnership Prosecutors Cheryl Sueing-Jones and Marissa Bejarano who identified this gap and are leading this innovative program.”

Participants receive a certificate at the end of the course the program serves as community service credits to those who are eligible. The next course will begin at the end of September. Those interested can contact Community Partnership Prosecutors [Marissa Bejarano](#) or [Cheryl Sueing-Jones](#).

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About the San Diego County District Attorney’s Office

The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.

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